



King County

Dow Constantine

King County Executive
401 Fifth Avenue, Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98104-1818

206-263-9600 Fax 206-296-0194

TTY Relay: 711

www.kingcounty.gov

March 16, 2010

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Senator, United States Senate
511 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Cantwell:

King County was named in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. to underscore the values of diversity, opportunity, and justice for all. I am proud to serve as Executive for one of the nation's largest and most diverse counties, which has been a home for immigrants over many years. King County currently has more than 360,000 foreign born residents with nearly 30 percent of Seattle's children born to immigrant families. Many of our thriving businesses are owned, managed, or employed by immigrants. Our schools represent an array of diverse cultures, and our region's economy thrives off the contributions from our immigrant communities.

The impact of a failed immigration system is felt throughout King County by immigrant families, service providers, businesses, county agencies, and other entities. King County has taken strong steps to locally address issues of immigration by creating policies that promote the inclusion of immigrants. We have also passed resolutions that call for comprehensive immigration reform. Most recently, I am proud that the County Council passed an ordinance promoting access to services for all King County residents by ensuring that county employees and county law enforcement provide service without reference to immigration status.

As King County Executive, I am committed to ensuring that immigrants are able to fully participate in our society, contributing their talents and skills toward a stronger county. I often hear stories of how immigrant families are affected by an imperfect immigration system; how businesses cannot hire high skilled service workers; how university graduates are unable to bring their talents to the workforce; and how tens of thousands of workers live in the shadows, unable to contribute to society in a way that would benefit all King County residents.

The Honorable Maria Cantwell

March 16, 2010

Page 2

King County needs immigration reform that provides a path toward earned legalization for undocumented immigrants working and living in the United States; visa programs to keep families together, protect workers' rights, and provide future immigration that is regulated and controlled rather than unlawful and chaotic; smart and effective enforcement measures targeted at eliminating exploitation of immigrant workers; prioritizes immigrant integration into our communities and country; respects the due process for all in the United States; and provides local governments with financial and technical assistance in delivering social services, health care, education, language services, and civic integration.

King County and the state of Washington will be stronger when our nation tackles immigration reform. I urge you to continue your outstanding leadership on this important issue, and to work toward a comprehensive immigration reform bill in the Senate.

We are grateful for your service and leadership to our state and our country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dow Constantine". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dow Constantine
King County Executive

cc: The Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States of America
The Honorable Chuck Schumer, Senator, Senate Judiciary Committee
The Honorable John Cornyn, Senator, Senate Judiciary Committee
The Honorable Zoe Lofgren, Congresswoman, House Judiciary Committee
The Honorable Steve King, Congressman, House Judiciary Committee
Washington Congressional Delegation